

The Paradox of Using Educational Reform as an Instrument for Social Transformation: A Marxist Analysis

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KEYWORDS Transformation. Reform. Development. Marxism. Functionalism. Education

ABSTRACT Attaining economic and social development is a goal that many nations the world over seek to accomplish with intense vigour. Consequently, many countries have developed or adopted models of development that are consistent with their notion of the concept of development and how best it can be brought about. In Zimbabwe, and indeed many other independent countries of Southern Africa, educational reform has been adopted as a major vehicle in the process of social and economic transformation. This explains why many independent countries of Southern Africa have made massive investments in educational reform. Whether or not these educational reforms have succeeded in yielding the much expected results in terms of socio-economic development is an issue that has generated a lot of controversy among critics. This conceptual paper adopts a Marxist theoretical approach to reflect, analyse and stimulate an intellectual discourse on the paradox of using educational reform as an agent for economic development. Its main thesis is that educational reforms, while necessary, are not sufficient to stimulate socio-economic development particularly in post-colonial states of Southern Africa. The article is based on the review of local and international literature on the relationship between education and development.